

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior version, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-12. (Canceled).

13. (New) A method for checking at least three sensors which detect a measured quantity in an area of an internal combustion engine, the method comprising:

comparing a measure for the sensor signal of the particular sensor to be checked to a reference signal;

obtaining the reference signal from at least one part of the sensor signals of the sensors to be checked;

recognizing a sensor as defective based on a comparison between the measure for the sensor signal and the reference signal;

performing the check in one of a steady-state operation, at a standstill, and after a cold start of the internal combustion engine; and

detecting the steady-state operation or the standstill or the cold start of the internal combustion engine based on a comparison between a sensor signal of at least one selected sensor having a slow rate of change and a sensor signal of a sensor to be checked.

14. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the reference signal is formed from a mean value of a measure of the sensor signals of at least one part of the sensors to be checked.

15. (New) The method of claim 14, wherein each of the sensor signals is weighted with a predefined factor when forming the mean value.

16. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein a sensor is recognized as defective if the difference between the measure for the sensor signal and the reference signal exceeds a predefined threshold value.

17. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the particular sensor whose measure for the sensor signal is the farthest from the reference signal is recognized as defective.

18. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the reference signal is obtained from a measure of a sensor signal of a single sensor to be checked.
19. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the standstill of the internal combustion engine is detected, a timer is provided which is started when a standstill is detected, and the check is provided after the elapse of a predefined time period.
20. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the sensor signal of a sensor recognized as defective is not taken into account in determining the reference signal.
21. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein no check is performed if the number of sensors recognized as defective exceeds a predefined number.
22. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the measured quantity is a temperature.